

Cookie Chronicles

WORLD NEWS

Family Feud Threatens New Year

When Mrs. New Year had twins Happy and Jolly last year, no one was sure how they would handle their joint position, but no one had expected the controversy that would arise between the representatives of 1999.

Life for the New Year's Family has always been an exceptional one. The family lives on a magical island at the International Date Line where life is very different from the rest of the planet. Time passes much more slowly on New Year's Island, so that by December 31st, Old Man New Year is ready to retire and let his newborn child carry on the tradition of representing the coming year. When the family had twins last year, they were unsure how to handle the unusual circumstance.

Happy, the older twin, followed the traditional practices of his father. Jolly was more experimental and outspoken, forever getting into trouble with his elders. By June in standard time, both twins had reached adulthood and started dating; by August, both men were engaged to be married. Controversy heated up when both Mrs. New Years became pregnant in November. The twins cannot agree on how to pass on the torch for the coming year. To make matters worse, the twins are arguing about whether it is appropriate to celebrate the Millennium this year. Happy is taking the traditional approach of the scholars which states that the true Millennium does not arrive until 2001 since there was not a year zero; Jolly has taken the popular stand that the year 2000 is more monumental and therefore should be treated as the official Millennium.

Rusty Sundial of the National Calendar Institute had this to say: "When this year started, we thought we could find a creative solution to the twin dilemma. However, seeing how things have turned out, we hope to encourage future New Year's Families to stick to naming just one New Year's Baby."

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Founder Ebenezer Scrooge would be disappointed by the scandal.

SCANDAL ROCKS EBENEZER SCROOGE FOUNDATION

After a turbulent year, the Ebenezer Scrooge Foundation announced the departure of CEO Harold Scrooge.

"Mr. Scrooge wasn't living up to the reputation of the foundation's namesake, his ancestor Ebenezer Scrooge," explained Charles Brown, Foundation Spokesman. "When Ebenezer Scrooge's nephew founded the organization in memory of his late uncle, his goal was to build a charity foundation which would help people in need year round." Recent revelations about Harold Scrooge's actions as CEO have rocked the foundation and damaged the charity's name.

Trouble surfaced during the summer with reports of donation deficits and operating losses. More trouble followed in October when rumors surfaced that Scrooge was using company money to pay for vacations and other non-business expenses. Though Scrooge denied the rumors, new evidence surfaced last week providing corroboration. Scrooge was not only siphoning off company money for private vacations, records proved that he was also using the funds to pay for an expensive apartment for his mistress and her extravagant living expenses. The news has affected Scrooge on a personal level, too. Report has it that he has separated from his wife, Emily.

The foundation's board of directors is currently interviewing replacement candidates, including Laura Warbucks, granddaughter of the famous Annie Warbucks, and movie star Sylvester Stallone, who has recently expressed an interest in being a "kinder, gentler Stallone."

Y2K UPDATE

Is Santa Y2K Ready?

Santa's Elves have been working triple time this year to get the North Pole facilities ready for Y2K.

Hans Candle, spokesman for the Elves Y2K Preparation Task Force, reported in November that the workshops were 100% ready. The main challenge was preparing the computer system which keeps track of Santa's massive list of good children and their Christmas gift wishes. The Task Force focused their efforts on updating the software and implementing retrofits to prepare the old system. While there were no concerns for this Christmas, Candle said, "We were worried that the Y2K bug would surface at the new year and scramble our huge database." This might have resulted in problems during the coming year such as inventory hiccups and faulty delivery. Candle said, "Kids wouldn't be too happy if they started getting the old fashioned toys like tops and wooden soldiers. They mostly want Pokemon and Star Wars Action Figures these days." The Task Force has certified that Santa's computer systems are 100% Y2K compliant, so children and their parents can relax about next year's wish list.

However, some of the other North Pole Y2K improvements have not been going smoothly, according to one source, Edwinna Bell, Sleigh Maintenance Manager. Santa's latest sleigh works by a combination of magic and computer technology. While magic and the flying reindeer keep the sleigh aloft on Christmas Eve, the computer enhancements store Santa's flight plan and manage his travel through high air traffic areas. Bell said, "We're having some trouble retrofitting the computer controls. Our software fix wasn't enough to fix the Y2K problems on the sleigh. Some of the hardware on board the sleigh needs to be replaced, and we are redesigning the system." Fortunately, Santa does not need to use the sleigh on the critical Y2K deadline. The technicians are planning to install the new hardware in January, long before it is required for next year's flight. The only drawback to the repair has been a delay for Mr. and Mrs. Claus' annual January vacation. This year they are planning to spend three weeks at a resort in Hawaii, but their trip has been postponed until February.